GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3326
ANSWERED ON:18.08.2003
ILLEGAL TRADE IN WILDLIFE
DALPAT SINGH PARASTE

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether unscrupulous traders touch up the horns of buffaloes, bamboo shoots to make them appear to be rhinoceros horns, camel bones are passed off as ivory, filling animal hide with scented ponds and charcoal to give the impression of deer musk; and

(b) if so, the details regarding the steps the Government have taken to protect the wildlife and other animals?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI DILIP SINGH JU DEV)

(a) The possibility of unscrupulous traders using fakes of rhinoceros, ivory and musk etc. is not ruled out.

(b) The steps taken by the Government to protect the wildlife and other animals are as under :-

(1) Steps taken at the State level:

(i) Legal protection has been provided to wild animals against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

(ii) State level and District level coordination committees have been set up in several States to prevent poaching and illegal trade in wildlife.

(iii) State Wildlife Authorities carry out regular checking of the stocks of dealers in captive animals.

(2) Steps taken at National level

(i) Government of India has set up Regional and Sub-regional Offices for wildlife preservation in major export and trade centres of the country to prevent smuggling of wild animals and their products.

(ii) Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders.

(iii) Financial and technical help is being extended to the States under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes, viz. Project Tiger, Project Elephant and Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries for enhancing the capacity and infrastructure of the States for providing effective protection to wild animals. Financial assistance is, in particular, provided for raising `Strike Forces` and providing arms to the protection staff for combating the organised poachers. Assistance is also provided for giving rewards to the informers for eliciting information about poachers and smugglers.

(iv) A Special Coordination and Enforcement Committee has been set up under the chairmanship of Secretary, Environment & Forests, Government of India, for control of poaching and illegal trade in wildlife.

(v) Export of wild animals and their derivatives is prohibited under EXIM policy.

(3) Steps taken at International level.

(i) Government of India seeks international co-operation under the provisions of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) for control of illegal trade in wildlife items.

(ii) To control transboundary trade a protocol has been signed with Peoples` Republic of China and a MOU has been signed with His Majesty`s Government of Nepal.

(iii) A Global Tiger Forum of Tiger Range Countries has been created for addressing international issues related to Tiger Conservation.